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REMARKS  
UPON A  
LETTER

Published in the

London Chronicle,

OR

*Universal Evening Post*, N<sup>o</sup> 115.

Containing an

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

CAUSES

OF THE

FAILURE of the late EXPEDITION against  
CAPE BRETON. *K*

IN A

Letter to a Member of Parliament.

LONDON:

Printed for M. COOPER in Pater-noster-Row.

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# REMARKS

UPON A

## LETTER

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### London Chronicle, &c.

SIR,

**I**N compliance with your request, I send you my thoughts upon the letter from Bristol published in the London Chronicle, or Universal Evening Post, No. 115; containing an account of the failure of our Expedition this year against Cape Breton.

It is certain, that no better scheme could have been projected for retrieving our late misfortunes in North America, than that enterprize. The importance of Cape Breton to the French may be estimated from the effect, which the reduction of it had in the last war; it paved the way for the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and the restitution of it appears to have been regarded by France, as the most essential article of the peace on her part,

by



[ 6 ]  
by her stipulating that *Ransoms* should be given  
for the performance of it.

The Expedition against this island was indeed  
laying the ax to the root of the tree ; and the re-  
duction of it would have given Canada its death  
wound ; our failure therefore in this important  
attempt may well occasion a *public* concern.

The aim of the writer of the Bristol letter is,  
to throw the blame of it upon the *Ministers*, and  
to justify the conduct of the General and Admi-  
ral in *abandoning* the Expedition, as he says they  
did, on the 4th of August.

He begins with saying, " Our *Ministers* were  
" certainly informed, long before Mr. Holbourn  
" sailed from Spithead, that Beaufremont's Squa-  
" dron was ordered to join the French fleet at  
" Louisbourg, but slighted the information, be-  
" cause they knew better ; That one would think  
" their fatal mistake concerning the *Naval*  
" Force, that was to be sent against *Minorca*,  
" would have cured them of their *Self-suffi-*  
" ciency ;" that " *We do every thing by halves,*  
" and so do *nothing* effectually ;" that " indeed  
" our *Naval* strength is so injudiciously divided  
" and parcelled out, that it is as easily broken as  
" a large sheaf of arrows taken out one by one ;"  
and proceeds to observe, " That the *Naval*  
" force sent to take Louisbourg was not only  
" too *small*, but dispatched too late in the year."

As to his assertion, " *that we do every thing by*  
" *halves*, and so do nothing effectually," I think  
it may be remarked, with regard to our *Land*  
Forces



Forces in North America, that his Majesty had there, before the arrival of the new-raised Highlanders, and 6000 troops last sent from Ireland, about 13,000; and has now upon that Continent upwards of 21,000 *Regular* troops; and we have undoubted accounts lately come from Quebec, that the French themselves do not compute their *Regular* troops in all Canada at more than 3000, nor those at Louisbourg to exceed 2500; so that we have a superiority of regular forces there on the side of the English, which, with the Irregulars, that the *Colonies* could and would readily raise upon such an occasion, seems sufficient, if *rightly* directed, to drive the French out of North America.

As to his *free* Reflections upon the *Ministers* for slighting the information which, he says, they had certainly received long before Mr. *Holbourn* sailed from *Spithead*, "that *Beaufremont* was ordered to *Louisbourg*," and his conclusion from thence, "that the naval force sent to take *Louisbourg* was too *small*," one would be naturally led by them to think, that the French fleet was, upon *Beaufremont's* junction of Mr. *Revest*, superior to Mr. *Holbourn*; whereas it appears by the Letter-writer's own list of the English and French ships, that Mr. *Holbourn* was much superior to *them*, so that there was no reason for augmenting his squadron: as to Mr. *la Motthe*, it is evident from the list, that he did not join Mr. *Revest* and Mr. *Beaufremont* at *Louisbourg* till 25 days after their arrival there; so that it seems most probable, that the destination of *his* squadron for *Louisbourg* was not determined upon by the French ministers themselves, till some time after; and

there

there is no appearance, that our *Ministers* had any reason to apprehend before Mr. *Holbourn* sailed from Spithead, that Mr. *la Motte* would be "ordered to *Louisbourg*;" but, as soon as they had, they sent Mr. *Holbourn* a reinforcement, which made him still superior to the whole French fleet.

And with regard to the observation, "That the naval force sent to take *Louisbourg* was dispatched too late in the year;" it is well known that Mr. *Holbourn* lay wind-bound at Spithead, St. Helen's, and Cork, six weeks in the whole at least, and was afterwards nine weeks on his passage to Halifax: if his ships had not been thus retarded, he must have arrived there by the beginning of May; in which case he would have had it in his power (according to the Letter-writer's own account of the times of the arrival of the French ships at *Louisbourg*) first to have intercepted Mr. *Revest's* and Mr. *Beaufremont's* squadrons separately, (but if not separately, his squadron was superior to their joint force) or at least to have prevented their entering the harbour; and Mr. *la Motte*, who did not get to *Louisbourg* till the 29th of June, would, in all probability, have shared the same fate; which must have secured the reduction of *Louisbourg*. That Mr. *Holbourn* did not happen to arrive at Halifax by that time, according to the intention of the *Ministers*, and what might have reasonably been expected, can't be justly charged to their account, but was wholly owing to contrary winds; an adverse Event, which all sea Enterprises are liable to, and no *Ministers* can either foresee or controul.

The



The writer of the Bristol letter indeed observes, " That our operations against Cape Breton should begin with the Spring ;" but allowing that to be the most advantageous time ; yet if Mr. *Holbourn* had arrived at Halifax by the beginning of May, or even three weeks later, the conquest of Louisbourg might have been very easily made this year.

The two most essential points in this case are, 1st. That the Troops employed upon this service should be strong enough to keep the Field against Succours, that may be thrown into Louisbourg during the siege, and to repulse any Parties of the enemy in their sallies from the town. 2dly. That they should be landed upon the Island in time to go through the necessary Operations for the reduction of Louisbourg before the winter sets in ; which it does not generally, till about the beginning of November.

Now both these points would have been secured, if Mr. *Holbourn's* Squadron had arrived at Halifax by the time, it might have reasonably been expected to have done, and the *General* had got there in due season.

As to the first ; the forces intended to have been landed upon the island were 11,000 *Regular* Troops ; which would doubtless have been strong enough to have carried on their works against the besieged, and kept themselves Masters of the Field.



And as to the second ; these Troops might have been landed by the middle or latter end of May at furthest ; which would have given them five months at least to have effected the reduction of Louisbourg ; a time much more than sufficient for 11,000 *Regular* Troops to have done it in against the opposition of 3500 *Irregulars*, which the writer of the Bristol letter says the Garrison of Louisbourg consisted of: the New England men, in *their* Expedition against it in 1745, did it in forty-seven days with 4000 *Irregulars* against a Garrison of 650 *Regular* Troops, and about 1600 inhabitants and fishermen capable of bearing arms.

It might possibly have taken up some time for the Troops to carry the Redoubts, which may be supposed to have been erected by the French since the last Expedition ; but if the Island was covered with them, they could have held out but a short time against the force of the Besiegers, and the City after that would have been a very easy Conquest ; for its weakness, I must observe to you, consists in the small extent of it, and the works within it ; which exposes the inhabitants and soldiers in every quarter to the cannon and bombs of the Besiegers ; so that the former must be obliged to quit their houses and betake themselves (as must also the soldiers when off duty) to their casemates, which are extremely damp and unwholesome ; and *that* must soon reduce them to such extremities, as would oblige them to surrender.

But

But this happened unfortunately not to be the case ; the General did not get to Halifax till about the 3d of July, which was 27 days after Mr. *Revest* and Mr. *Beaufremont* had got to Louisbourg, and four days after Mr. *la Motthe* ; nor did the *Admiral* arrive at Halifax till the 9th of July. I shall therefore proceed to examine the reasons assigned by the writer of the Bristol letter, for the *General's* and *Admiral's* not proceeding *then* to Louisbourg.

In the first place, he says, that one 64 gun ship lying in the harbour of Louisbourg would render the landing of Troops upon the Island impracticable ; whereas there were eighteen capital Ships there, when the *Admiral* arrived at Halifax ; his words are, “ Ships of war lying in the harbour [of Louisbourg] command in such manner the place, where our Troops must necessarily debark, that early as we [New England men] were, had the *Vigilant*, a ship of 64 guns, got in, instead of being taken by Sir *Peter Warren*, she would have rendered our landing impracticable ;” and he says, “ That the *General* ought to have landed on *Cape Breton* before any ships of war from France or Quebec could get there to annoy his troops in their debarkation ; that instead of that the list [of the English and French squadrons annexed to his letter] “ will shew, that there were eighteen capital Ships of war in Louisbourg harbour ten days before *Admiral Holbourn* arrived at Halifax ; that his [the General's] first intelligence was indeed, that there were only seven capital Ships of war in the har-



“ bour of Louisbourg ; upon which, tho’ such  
 “ a force was capable of galling his Troops most  
 “ terribly in their landing, yet he embarked  
 “ them, in order to dispute the point ; but Capt.  
 “ Edwards on the Newfoundland station taking  
 “ an advice boat, about the same time, sent him  
 “ a true account of the French strength, which  
 “ you will see in the annexed list ; whereupon,  
 “ a Council of war being called, consisting of land  
 “ and sea Officers, it was agreed unanimously,  
 “ *excepting only one dissenting vote*, that the at-  
 “ tempt was impracticable at that time ;” and  
 then proceeds to observe, “ That it would have  
 “ been against common prudence, and fool-  
 “ hardy to have made the attempt.”

I intirely agree with the writer of the letter,  
 “ That if ships lying in the harbour of Louif-  
 “ bourg command in such manner the place,  
 “ where our troops must necessarily debark, as  
 “ that *one* 64 gun Ship would render their land-  
 “ ing impracticable,” (as he asserts) it would  
 have been the height of *fool-hardiness* to have  
 attempted landing them against *eighteen* capital  
 Ships lying there ; and in that case it will be dif-  
 ficult to reconcile with *common prudence* the at-  
 tempt, which he says the *General* had determined  
 upon making to land his troops against the fire  
 of *seven* capital Ships ; as also to account for his  
*altering* that determination ; for it is well known,  
 that there is not room in that part of the harbour,  
 from whence it is in the power of Ships to annoy  
 an Enemy on shoar, for more than five to spread,  
 and be properly placed for that purpose ; so that  
 the *General* might as well have landed his troops  
 against

against *eighteen* Ships as against *seven*; eighteen could not have obstructed his landing more than seven: and if he thought it *adviseable* to attempt landing his Troops against seven ships, the intelligence he received from Captain Edwards, "that there were *eighteen* in the harbour," could be no reason with him for altering his first determination, as the writer of the Bristol letter says it was: but it is clear, that his *assertion* is not well founded.

What place it is, where he says our Troops must *necessarily* debark, he has not indeed pointed out. I suppose he can't mean the harbour. As to Chapeau Rouge Bay, from whence the New England men landed in their Expedition against Cape Breton in 1745, it is about twelve miles deep, and affords many good places for landing troops upon the back of Louisbourg; and it is well known, that the distance of the Bay is in some parts upwards of five miles from Louisbourg harbour, in *none* less than three; and that no fight can be had, from ships in the harbour, of Troops landing from the Bay; so that it is impossible for Ships lying there to give Troops the least annoyance in their debarkation from the Bay.

Another reason assigned by the letter-writer is, "That the French were much superior in  
 " the number of their capital ships, carrying a  
 " much greater number of guns, all of much  
 " heavier metal, and much larger calibres than  
 " ours; and if the *General* and *Admiral* had been  
 " nevertheless so rash as to make the intended  
 " descent."



“ descent,” he asks, “ What could they in reason expect, but that the French fleet would come out, as they ought, fight Admiral Holbourn, defeat him of course, and then sink or destroy all our Transports, with 11,000 land Forces on board.”

*Admiral Holbourn's* Squadron, according to the list annexed to the letter, consisted of seventeen ships of the line, viz. one of 80 guns, two of 74, one of 70, two of 68, three of 64, six of 60, one of 54, and one of 50, five frigates of 20 guns each, and six sloops carrying 72 guns in the whole. — The French fleet consisted of eighteen ships, viz. one of 84 guns, two of 80, six of 74, one of 70, and eight of 64, besides six frigates, viz. one of 40 guns, three of 36, one of 30, and one of 26 ; which is doubtless a force so much superior to that of *Mr. Holbourn's*, that if the only question before the Council of war was, whether it was adviseable to risque a battle with the French, considering the bad consequences, which might have attended a defeat on our part, I think the determination of the Council against doing it, was right.

But there is another very *material* circumstance to be considered in the case ; which is ; the *General* and *Admiral* had received intelligence, that the French crews were *very sickly*, and their Squadron thereby much weakened ; and this intelligence was corroborated by another circumstance, viz. that when the *Admiral* cruized with only five or six ships off Louisbourg, the *French* did not send any ships after him ; which plainly discovered

covered some backwardness in them to quit the Harbour ; and what good reason can be given for that, if the force of their ships was what the writer of the Bristol letter represents it to be, and their crews were in good health ?

These circumstances he takes notice of, and accounts for in the following manner ; “ It is said  
 “ that the French fleet was so greatly weakened  
 “ by sickness, that it could have made but very  
 “ little opposition ; but supposing this to be  
 “ true, how could *Lord Loudoun* and *Admiral*  
 “ *Holbourn* know it ? They were indeed in-  
 “ formed by a fisherman, that the French crews  
 “ were sickly, yet not so sickly as to render them  
 “ despicable Enemies ; besides we see how little  
 “ the intelligence of fishermen was to be de-  
 “ pended upon ; for they said, there were but  
 “ seven sail of French ships in the harbour, when  
 “ there were eighteen of the line, and six fri-  
 “ gates from 26 to 40 guns : some think it odd  
 “ that *Admiral Holbourn* should venture up to  
 “ *Louisbourg*, and cruize off with only five or  
 “ six ships of the line, and yet think it impru-  
 “ dent to go up with his whole Force, and the  
 “ Transports ; but they do not rightly consider  
 “ the difference ; had the French come out with  
 “ a superior force in one case, he might have  
 “ made at most a running fight of it ; but in the  
 “ other, what would have become of the Trans-  
 “ ports, and land Forces ? he must either have  
 “ left them to perish by themselves, or have pe-  
 “ rished with them ; at least this is what he  
 “ might have reasonably expected.”

The



The reason assigned for the *General's* and *Admiral's* *slighting* the intelligence, they had received of the sickly state of the French crews, *because* it was given them by a fisherman, seems far from being satisfactory;—Fishermen's news is like that of other mariners, sometimes true, sometimes false. I have been credibly informed, that the New England men had their first intelligence of Canso's being surprized, and burnt by the French in 1744, brought to Boston by a *Fisherman*, as was that of the arrival of Mr. Conflans in 1746 with four capital ships before Chebueto harbour; (now Halifax) where he came from the West-Indies, in order to join duke d'Anville's squadron, which arrived at Chebueto soon after: had the New England men in these cases slighted the intelligence given them, *because Fishermen* brought it (from some of whom they doubtless had at other times received wrong information) Nova Scotia would in the first place have been probably lost that year; and in the latter, the Colonies would have lost much time for putting themselves into the best state of defence they could, against the French Armament.

Their chief protection indeed against it was, it is well known, owing to the *sickness* of the men on board it; For though the French Admiral had Treble the number of capital ships to that of the English squadron, which then lay at Louisbourg, yet they were so weakened by the *sickly* state of their crews, that he did not think fit to venture out of Chebueto, but kept in the harbour the whole season, till he quitted the coast; and  
it

it was the Opinion of the best Judges there, that the English squadron, though so much inferior to the French in respect of the number and size of it's ships, yet on account of the health and vigour of it's men, was of sufficient force, even to have attacked the French *in* their harbour.

If the French fleet in Louisbourg harbour this year was in the same *sickly* state, that Mr. d'Anville's was in at Chebucto in 1746, it is clear that Mr. Holbourn's *seventeen* ships of the line, which it does not appear were in the least disabled by sickness, were a superior Force to the *eighteen* French capital ships: the fisherman's intelligence therefore was a matter of such moment, that it ought not to have been slighted *only* because other fishermen had happened before to give a wrong account of the number of the ships in Louisbourg harbour; especially when the information he gave, had been strengthened by so considerable a circumstance, as Mr. *Holbourn's* appearing off Louisbourg with only five or six ships, and cruizing there without being molested by the French: it was undoubtedly of the utmost importance to have all possible enquiry made into the truth of it; for if it was true, *as no body now doubts it was*; the *General* and *Admiral* need not have been under any apprehension that the French squadron would have come out to attack Mr. *Holbourn's whole* fleet: and in such case, if the troops had been landed, it would have put it into their power to have made themselves masters of the French fleet, as well as of Louisbourg: for then the ships in the harbour would have been exposed to the cannon of batteries raised on  
C shoar,



shore, which the *writer of the letter* observes, " would command the entrance into the harbour so, that no ship can come in or go out, " and if they should slip in, in the night, can infallibly destroy them." He supposes indeed these Batteries to be raised *before* ships enter the harbour; but according to accounts given of the situation of the ground, where such Batteries ought to be raised, it appears practicable to erect them, even *after* ships have entered, in such manner, as that they will not be much exposed to the fire from the ships.

It seems extremely unfortunate, that the Expedition was abandoned, and the *General* happened to return with 6000 troops to New York (as it is said he did) before the four ships last sent to Mr. *Holbourn* joined him: this reinforcement, which must have arrived at Halifax soon after, would have made *his* squadron superior to the French fleet, even in the number and force of ships, and possibly have eased all difficulties about landing the troops, and venturing to lay before Louisbourg.

As to the other reason assigned by the writer of the Bristol letter for the *General's* not landing his Troops, viz. " That he had received information " that there were near 3500 Irregulars in Louisbourg;" this surely could have no weight with the General when he had 11,000 Regular Troops ready for the attack.

There seems indeed one further difficulty with regard to landing the Troops, which the writer of the

the

the Bristol letter has not mentioned : that is, the great Body of Seamen which must be supposed to be on board eighteen Capital ships, detachments from which might, upon occasion, have been employed on shoar against the Besiegers, in several parts of land service ; and I think this of itself would be an insuperable objection to landing them, unless they too could have drawn like support and assistance from Mr. *Holbourn's* Squadron in case of need : but as they might certainly have done that, if Mr. *Holbourn* was strong enough to have lay'd before Louisbourg ; the difficulty appears to be solved, especially as the French crews were so sickly.

I now proceed to examine what the writer of the Bristol letter observes concerning the time, when he says the Troops ought to have been landed on Cape Breton, in order to have made the Expedition succeed : upon this he lays great stress ; he says in one part of his letter, that  
 “ our Operations against Cape Breton should  
 “ commence with the Spring, not later than the  
 “ end of March or beginning of April—that the  
 “ moment the thick fogs, which cover the sea,  
 “ and ice, which choaks up the harbours of Cape  
 “ Breton, begin to clear away, is the proper  
 “ time for making the descent ; and that it was  
 “ wholly owing to the New England men's ob-  
 “ serving and seizing it, that they succeeded in  
 “ their gallant attempt [in 1745] ; and that  
 “ whoever hopes for the *same* success, must take  
 “ the *same* measures.” — And in another part  
 he says, “ We can't take Louisbourg unless we  
 C 2 “ begin



“ begin our Operations against it in April ;”  
 And *why* then was it not done ? The only reason  
 which the letter-writer assigns for that, is con-  
 tained in the following words ; he says, “ He  
 “ [Lord Loudoun] ought to have been enabled  
 “ to begin his Operations against Louisbourg in  
 “ April ; whereas Admiral Holbourn, without  
 “ whose assistance he could not proceed, did not  
 “ arrive till July 9th : he ought to have landed  
 “ on Cape Breton before any ships of war from  
 “ France or Quebec could get there to annoy  
 “ his Troops in their debarkation ; instead of  
 “ that, the list will shew that there were eighteen  
 “ Capital ships in Louisbourg harbour ten days  
 “ before Admiral Holbourn arrived at Halifax.”

The amount of this is, that the *General* could  
 not proceed then for want of the assistance of Ad-  
 miral Holbourn's squadron ; but *why* not ? The  
 6000 Troops which the *General* had then ready, and  
 afterwards carried with him to Halifax upon that  
 service, must (according to the letter-writer's  
 own observation) have been, without the assist-  
 ance of the six Regiments from Ireland, a suffi-  
 cient Land force for the reduction of Louisbourg  
 against the French Troops, which could be ex-  
 pected to have been found in Garrison there, at  
 that season of the year ; at which time likewise  
 there was no danger of the Troops being molested  
 by the French ships of war, either upon their  
 passage to Cape Breton or debarkation there :  
 for, he says, “ That both Sea and Land forces are  
 “ forced to quit Louisbourg as soon as the win-  
 “ ter begins to set in ; and that by attacking it  
 “ early in the Spring (viz. in April) before they  
 “ could

“ could receive any reinforcements or supplies  
 “ from Europe, we shall take the French at a  
 “ total disadvantage.” And *after* landing of  
 our Troops they need not, according to *his* asser-  
 tion, have feared any Succours being thrown into  
 Louisbourg; for he says, “ If our troops get  
 “ on shoar time enough to erect a Battery or two  
 “ before any ships from Europe arrive, they  
 “ can command the entry into the harbour of  
 “ Louisbourg so, that no ship can come in or  
 “ go out; and, if they should slip in, in the night,  
 “ can infallibly destroy them;” and in another  
 part of his letter, he says, “ our Troops [when  
 landed] “ would so command the entrance  
 [into the harbour] “ as to render all access im-  
 “ practicable.”—And another very considerable  
 circumstance, which he seems ignorant of, might  
 have been mentioned; viz. that, besides raising  
 Batteries, it would have been absolutely in the  
 power of our Troops to have made themselves  
 masters (as the New England men did three days  
 after *their* landing) of the grand Battery, which  
 consists of twenty-eight cannon of 42 pound  
 ball, and two of 18 pound, much the greatest  
 part of which point directly down the harbour,  
 and command every vessel at it's entrance into  
 it.

The letter-writer's assertion therefore, “ That  
 “ the *General* was not enabled to begin his opera-  
 “ tions against Louisbourg early in the Spring,  
 “ for *want* of the assistance of Mr. *Holbourn's*  
 “ squadron,” is confuted by his own observa-  
 tions.

This



This assertion appears likewise to be contrary to the *General's* own sentiments in this point ; for if he was of Opinion, that it would not have been safe for him to have proceeded in the Expedition, when the coast was clear of French ships of war (as in fact it was till the 4th day of June), without the assistance of Mr. *Holbourn's* squadron, it seems impossible to account for his conduct in staying at New York, till the latter end of that month ; and *then* proceeding to Halifax, after he had certain advice that Mr. *Revest* and Mr. *Beaufremont* were arrived at Louisbourg, and that Mr. *Holbourn* was not got to Halifax ; in which case he certainly run an extreme risque of being intercepted in his passage thither ; he would doubtless have either proceeded to Halifax before the arrival of the French ships at Louisbourg, or have stayed till Mr. *Holbourn* was got to Halifax ; unless he was prevented by positive Orders not to sail from New York, till the arrival of Mr. *Holbourn* at Halifax, or was not ready to proceed from thence till the latter end of June ; neither of which ought to be presumed : for in the former of those cases, he must be guilty of a breach of Orders ; and in the latter, of a most inexcusable delay in his preparations ; which was not the case, if we may depend upon our advices from New York, viz. that his Troops were actually embarked on board the Transports by the 6th of May.

With regard to the *General's* not proceeding from New York to *Louisbourg* in April ; if any doubt was made whether 6000 Troops would have *then* been a sufficient force for the reduction of it,

it, (for which I think there is no room) might they not have been strengthened with 1000 New England Irregulars, many of whom, with their Officers, would have been of singular service, from the experience they had gained in the last Expedition against Cape Breton ; and if occasion had required, might they not have been still further strengthened with some Troops, which might have been *then* spared from Nova Scotia ?

For my own part ; when the accounts first appeared in the prints, that a secret Expedition was to be made from New York with 6000 Troops, (which it was conjectured were destined against Cape Breton) the notion I entertained, that they would have proceeded to Louisbourg very early in the Spring, and landed before the arrival of the French Squadron there, (as the New England men did in 1745) was so striking a circumstance in favour of the Enterprize, that I had no doubt of the success of it.

The letter - writer concludes with saying,  
 “ That they [meaning the *General* and *Admiral*]  
 “ are both by this time much better acquainted  
 “ with every thing necessary to the success of the  
 “ Expedition, than any other *Commander*, who  
 “ can be sent out : nor is it to be hoped, that  
 “ *Lord Loudoun's* successor, whoever he be, will  
 “ have near so much influence over the North  
 “ Americans ; which is a very material point :  
 “ I wish to God, our ministers saw this matter  
 “ in the same light, in which it appears evidently to, Dear Sir, &c.”

It



It is not to be doubted, that the *General* must by *this* time be much better acquainted with every part of his Majesty's service in North America from his Experience in it these two last Campaigns ; but it is possible, that we may not have the same favourable opportunity for making the conquest of Cape Breton another year, that we had this ; for I don't think we can absolutely depend upon what the letter-writer so positively asserts, " That a French Army or Fleet cannot " winter in that inhospitable part of the world " [Louisbourg or Canada]. That he is mistaken in the former part of his assertion, no person, who is in the least versed in the history of this war, can be ignorant ; for it is well known that the Troops, which have been sent from France to Louisbourg and Canada, since the commencement of it, have *actually* winter'd there ; and that it is not possible for a Fleet to do the same, tho' there may have been no instance of that, seems far from being certain.

I have been informed, that in 1745, two ships of Sir Peter Warren's squadron wintered in the north east part of Louisbourg harbour : however, from the accounts I have heard, of the exposure of it to the south west winds, the small rise of the tides within the harbour, and the quantities of ice with which it is generally filled at that season, it would be too hazardous for a Fleet to attempt the same ; but, that a very large squadron may safely winter in Chapeau Rouge Bay, I believe there is no doubt to be made ; a French squadron would indeed lie very much exposed there to be attacked by our ships ; and how  
far

far that may be an objection with the French against venturing their ships there, I will not take upon me to say. I am well assured, that the late Sir *Peter Warren*, who had the chief command at sea in the intended Expedition against Canada in 1746, was, from the inquiry he then made in America, concerning the practicableness of wintering a Fleet in the river St. Lawrence, so fully persuaded of it, that in case that Expedition had proceeded, and he had found it too late in the season to have effected it that year, he determined to winter the ships under his command in one of the harbours there, the name of which I don't immediately recollect.

As to the letter-writer's proposal, that an English Fleet destined for an Expedition against *Louisbourg* or Canada, should winter in North America, it is, I think, not only practicable but very adviseable : but I must differ from him in what he says in his postscript, viz. " No Captain of a man of war ought to be consulted about wintering in Halifax ; not one of them will give his vote for it, as there are no public divisions there." For to my knowledge, several of these Officers have themselves wintered in North America, and would be very proper to be consulted ; nor can I entertain so base an opinion of them, as to suppose, that they would ever let their Pleasures come in competition with the service of their King and Country.

The influence, which he observes, *Lord Loudoun* has gained over the North Americans, must certainly be of great advantage to his *Lordship*,  
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and is, as he rightly observes, a most material point for a Commander in that part of the world; and it must be acknowledged, considering what the *events* of the war in North America have been these *two last* years, that it is no small conquest to make over New England men, who, till of *late*, have not been accustomed to such misfortunes, and from their general character seem as little formed to bear *disappointments* of that kind, as any Subjects whatever within his Majesty's dominions.

I have now, Sir, gone through the examination of what the writer of the Bristol letter assigns for the causes of our failure in this year's Expedition against Cape Breton, and his reasons for it's being abandoned; but as the *General* and *Admiral* might, for ought we know, give other reasons for their conduct in this Enterprize, than what he has disclosed in his letter, and which we are at present unacquainted with, it would be *prejudging* in the case, to form a conclusive Opinion, without hearing those reasons, if any such there be.

In the mean time I would observe to you, that from several marks discernable in the Bristol letter, the writer of it, whoever he is, appears to me, not only to have resided in Halifax at the time of holding the several Councils of war there, which he mentions, but likewise to have had a *participation* in them. His privity to many things relative to that Council, wherein he says *the resolution of abandoning the Enterprize* was taken; particularly the unanimous agreement of  
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the members in it, *excepting only one dissenting vote*; which every person, who is acquainted with the nature of Councils of war, knows, are matters of secrecy, to which none but the Members and Secretary are made privy, is a circumstance, which with others, seem to me plainly to indicate that he assisted in those Councils, or at least, that those circumstances were communicated to him either by the Secretary or some of the Members of the Council.

Upon the whole, Sir, nothing can be more manifest, than that the design of the Bristol letter is to apologize for the conduct chiefly of the *General*, though at the expence of the *Ministers*: and I cannot but observe, the writer's bestowing on him the high encomium, which the Romans did on Quintus Fabius Maximus, viz. *Qui CUNCTANDO restituit rem*; alluding to the celebrated instance of Generalship, which *Fabius Maximus* shewed in avoiding to come to an engagement with the Victorious Hannibal. This is a matter of too delicate a nature for me to enter into a particular examination of. But I think I may venture to remark one circumstance, which seems parallel in the stories of both Generals, viz. That as the Roman General's Countrymen at *first* saw his conduct in so unfavourable a light that they passed a public (*a*) censure upon him; notwithstanding which, as the Roman historian says, he (*b*) obstinately persisted in it: so, many of the British General's Country-

(*a*) Vid. Liv. lib. 23. cap. 25. 26.

(*b*) Vid. Liv. lib. 22. cap. 15.



men have long seen *his* in the same light; that the Romans did at *first* that of Fabius Maximus; notwithstanding which his *Lordship* has most steadily persevered in it: and as at last, the Roman General's name was immortalized in Europe by the effect, which *his* delays then had for stopping the Carthaginians from over-running Italy; so it is to be hoped by all well wishers to their Country, that the British General's name may likewise be perpetuated to his honour in *North America*, by the happy effects, which *his memorable* delays to come to action there may have in the *end* towards hindering the French from over-running the *British Colonies*.

I am, &c.



POST-

## POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE finishing my remarks, I find in the public prints, an extract of a letter dated September 15th from on board his Majesty's ship *Newark*, Admiral Holbourn Commander, on a cruize off Cape Breton, in which, it is said, " we have been cruising  
" off the harbour's mouth ever since the 20th  
" of August with sixteen sail of the line,  
" but they [the *French*] will not come out to  
" us."

As this account, Sir, of the behaviour of the *French fleet* appears to have been sent from on board the *Admiral's* own ship by some Officer, who could not be mistaken in it, and it is agreeable to their former behaviour in suffering the *Admiral* to cruize with five or six ships of the line off the harbour without molestation, it seems to put it out of all doubt, that the Troops might have been landed on *Cape Breton* without any risque of the *French Fleet's* coming out to attack Mr. *Holbourn*; especially considering the intelligence, which the *General* and *Admiral* had received, that the *French* crews were very *sickly*; which intirely accounts for the behaviour of the *French* in both cases.

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It is agreed on all hands, that since Mr. Holbourn has been reinforced with the four ships last sent him, the *French Admiral* has not discovered the least disposition of coming out of the harbour.

FINIS.



